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AN

ANSWER

TO THE

Woollen Draper's Letter

ON THE

FRENCH TREATY.

ADDRESSED TO THE

PEOPLE OF ENGLAND,

BUT MORE ESPECIALLY TO THE

WOOLLEN MANUFACTURERS.

"Quid si Cælum Ruat?"

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BRITISH MUSEUM

AN

ANSWER

TO THE

Woollen Draper's Letter.

Friends and Fellow Subjects,

IN expectation that ſome able pen would before this time have replied to a publication under the title of "*A Woollen Draper's Letter on the French Treaty, &c.*" I have hitherto forborn to offer my ſentiments upon its contents.—Inſtigated by a wiſh, as far as my poor abilities extend, to prevent the ill effects which a publication, fraught with ſuch an evident tendency to excite clamour againſt the meaſures of government, might have upon thoſe, who from limited knowledge are apt to judge ſuperficially, I ſit down to inveſtigate the contents of the WOOLLEN DRAPER'S LETTER, and to expoſe his fallacy to the eyes of my fellow countrymen.

I muſt firſt obſerve, that I am fully perſuaded, from an attentive peruſal of the publication in

queſtion, that the ſignature is a forged one, the ſtile affected, and the author one of thoſe miſchievous ſcriblers of a faction, who, right or wrong, muſt oppoſe every tranſaction of government. To corroborate this opinion, let us notice, that our "*Factor*," (for ſuch is the character he thinks proper to aſſume in the very curious and *neceſſary* hiſtory he gives of himſelf and family) has commenced his letter, not in the moderate and unartful manner which we ſhould expect from a man of buſineſs, but in a mode that is cunningly calculated to work upon the paſſions of thoſe to whom he is addreſſing himſelf, and prepare them to view the fallacious arguments through the miſt of prejudices, and with the jaundiced eye of jealouſy and ſuſpicion. "I ſit down," ſays he, "to write to you, with "true and hearty concern on a hard and trying "occaſion, when *I know for a certainty*, that your "livelihoods, and all the decent comforts of "yourſelves and your families are at ſtake; every "honeſt man who wiſhes well to the hundreds, "and hundreds of thouſands, concerned in our "woollen manufactures, every maſter clothier, "every apprentice in our trade, and I may add "too, every landholder and farmer, who grows "wool in any part of the country, ſhould one "and all look on the preſent moment, as the "moſt hazardous and dangerous to their con-"cerns that ever was, or ever can be."—Is this

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the exordium that a plain manufacturer, or a man in trade, would have introduced his ſubject with? —No, my friends, it is evidently the work of party, a party that are conſtantly labouring to overturn a virtuous, an able, and upright miniſtry, that they may again introduce themſelves into power.—Let us for a time admit this gentleman to be what he would affect, a FACTOR, a WOOLLEN DRAPER;—it is evident, from the account he gives of himſelf, that the *woollen* trade is a very *profitable* buſineſs, for he has, as he informs us, with only a *moderate* ſhare of ſucceſs, not only acquired a competent fortune for himſelf, but hopes in his latter days to make up a ſufficient capital for his ſons, even drawing out "handſome portions for their ſiſters." If, then, we were to allow him the full force of all his arguments in favour of France, we might ſtill conclude, that to affect a great national benefit, a buſineſs from whence ſuch large emoluments are attained, might very well ſuffer ſome encroachments on its profits, from a means, whence ſuch amazing advantages would derive to many other branches of manufacture, ſome of which are of equal importance.—He appeals to "*all who know him*" for his not being one of thoſe who meddle with matters "*out of his calling.*"—To this I can very readily aſſent, ſince I believe thoſe who do *know him*, well know that he does not meddle out of his *calling* when he is

writing paragraphs and pamphlets; though I will not admit he ſpeaks truth, when he ſays, " as long as the country thrives, and trade flouriſhes, who is *in*, or who is *out*, is a matter of no concern to me, or mine."

Having finiſhed his family narrative, he informs his friends and fellow tradeſmen all over England, " that a ſcheme ſeventy years old is again patched up;" and then proceeds in the following manner: " This *wiſe* ſcheme is to give " power and licence to the French to bring in " ALL their *woollens* to our market, on proviſo of " our Mancheſter merchants having the ſame " privilege to ſell the *French* their *cottons*, and " the Birmingham and Sheffield traders, and the " iron branch." When we peruſe his account of the French manufactures, we muſt conclude, that if they bring in " ALL" their woollens to our market, we ſhall be ſtocked indeed. But does not the proviſo evidently manifeſt, that the factor wiſhes to excite in the minds of one branch of manufacturers a jealouſy of others? that is to ſay, he would ſet the *woollen* againſt the cotton and hardware; but not contented with this, he muſt alarm them with the ruin of the *Weſt-India merchants*, whom he ſays, " you " well know deal largely for our goods."—Our factor, I believe, has never been an inhabitant of the torrid zone, or he would have found that the climate

climate was not very favourable to the *woollen* manufactures. The factor ſhould have been careful to preſerve an appearance of knowledge relative to the exports of the commodity he is ſuppoſed to deal in.

After the peruſal of " this *dangerous* treaty," which he had " read over and over," and having " conſulted many of *his* friends, capital " merchants, and others in the city, chiefly as " to that part which touches them to the quick," he can " ſafely aſſure" us, " that not a man of " them, but thinks with *him*, that *all of the* " *branch are abſolutely expoſed to ruin by it.*"—It is ſomewhat ſtrange, if there was " *not a man*" amongſt the " *capital* merchants," but who held this opinion, that they have not before this time, by ſome public action or other, given teſtimony to the truth of what the *Draper* has advanced. I much fear he will acquire as little credit for his candour, and veracity, as he certainly does for his argument; and that no one will corroborate his aſſertion, except thoſe of his party, that the treaty is " a ſhameful ſacrifice of the beſt trades " of Old England for the vaſt luxuries of " France."

In order to convince my fellow countrymen of the futility and untruth of the Draper's aſſertions,

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it will be neceſſary for me to analyze his letter, and to examine its conſtituent parts.

He tells us, that if in purſuance of the articles of the treaty, *low duties* are laid on the French woollens, " on pretence that, as we are to have " the ſame right of exporting ours to France, " both countries will be on a par," he can prove " to be neither more nor leſs than giving the " French power to *underſell* us with their cloths, " in our *home* market; becauſe, forſooth, we " may have leave to carry out ours *where they* " *can never be ſold.*"—How does he prove this? —By giving us an account that the manufacturers of France have extraordinary advantage over us, in " *low taxes, cheap proviſions*, and by " conſequence, *cheap labour*;" but this man of buſineſs never once looks at the *per contra* ſide of the queſtion, and examines the *diſadvantages* which the French muſt labour under by a competition with us, in our *home* market, in thoſe articles wherein we might fear them; ſuch are the neceſſity and charge of procuring *Engliſh wool*, the additional charges of ſhipping, freight, inſurance, &c. But before this *factor* of falſehood proceeds upon his pretended proofs, he gives us a ſpecimen of his legal knowledge, and very dogmatically tells " his friends," you will all of you obſerve, therefore, " that though the " treaty has been ſigned and ſealed, yet never-

" theleſs

" theleſs *it is not* LAW *yet*;" and totally forgetting the buſineſs of the counter, the yard, and ſheers, explains the extent of the powers of government in making treaties. The intention here is evident, and the inference he wiſhes to be drawn from it, is this; that the manufacturers may be as turbulent as they pleaſe, and he might as well have ſaid in plain terms,—You may aſſemble my boys, and make as much clamour as you think proper;—remember the treaty you object to " *is not law*;" you are not oppoſing an act of the legiſlator;—but leaſt that ſhould not be ſufficient, I will quote his words, and aſk any impartial perſon, whether they are not the language of a deſperate faction. " Our bleſſed " conſtitution having wiſely left us" ſays he, " in a point ſo near, and dear to us all, this " great ſecurity againſt any violent and ſudden " ſhiftings from our old, fixed, and ſteady com- " merce, either through ignorance of the par- " ties concerned, or the raſhneſs they might " fall into or contrive;" (the miniſters are exceedingly obliged to him for the inſinuation.) " Wherefore I ſay this treaty, being open to " the free and full obſervation of every perſon, " high and low, in all quarters of the kingdom, " on purpoſe to collect the real, genuine opi- " nions of our own repreſentatives upon it; it " cannot fail, but that the intereſts and liveli- " hoods of all their poor, but honeſt conſtituents

" muſt be cloſely conſulted, and eſpecially at-
" tended to; wherefore let me caution you all,
" as you prize yourſelves and your families, not
" to be cajoled either by favour or affection, or
" any deceitful pretence of *not meddling with ſtate*
" *affairs*, out of the free exerciſe of your under-
" ſtandings, on a buſineſs which in a manner
" comes before you for your judgment."—Is not the hand of oppoſition to be traced in this throughout, endeavouring to excite murmurs and diſcontents amongſt a quiet and induſtrious people; to withdraw their attention from their induſtry, and fill their heads with fantaſtic ideas, to anſwer the purpoſes of a turbulent and diſappointed party? But I truſt they are not to be deluded by ſuch artifices; that they will perceive their true intereſt is to purſue their buſineſs, truſting to the ſuperior knowledge of thoſe, who are more capable of judging of the policy of the national engagements; who have the wiſdom to foreſee advantages, undiſcernable to the vulgar eye; whoſe only aim is the glory of the nation; and who can have no intereſt independent of the public good.

The *Draper*, proceeding to the buſineſs of manufacturing his proofs, commences with a long catalogue of the articles which are taxed, and informs his Readers, that not only every comfort and neceſſary of life, but even the nativity

vity of their children, and the ſepulture of their parents, could not now eſcape the unfeeling graſp of our unchriſtian-like miniſters, and exclaims thus, "All pay the higheſt taxes that ever were impoſed on any country, in any age." If we were to paſs over the evident untruth of this allegation, what, if true, would it make in favour of his argument? I admit that our miniſtry have been under the neceſſity of impoſing very heavy taxes (thanks to the ſupporters of the faction who created that neceſſity,) that theſe taxes very much increaſe the price of proviſions, and that a neceſſary enhancement in the price of labour muſt of courſe take place; but notwithſtanding the price of labour is high, it is a known fact, that we can, even in the metropolis, manufacture *Woollen Cloths*, ſo as to afford them conſiderably cheaper than any French cloth can be ſold in our market, of equal goodneſs. The factor either is, or would affect to be, ignorant of the oppreſſive nature of the French taxation. If he is ignorant, he ſhould be informed that the *Salt Tax* alone, amounts to above *two millions and a half* ſterling. Every individual, great and ſmall, muſt pay for a certain portion, whether they conſume it or not. Let the *Factor* and his factious brethren think on this, and then reflect upon their late groundleſs and malevolent complaints againſt that excellent meaſure of the preſent miniſter, the COMMUTATION TAX, the

good effects of which will convey the ſtrongeſt teſtimony, to poſterity, of his wiſdom and ſound policy. Admitting, however, as I have done, the weight of our own taxes, and allowing that labour is much cheaper in *France*, theſe circumſtances can never injure our manufactures. There are a variety of conſiderations which will infinitely overbalance this ſuppoſed advantage. The excellence of our workmanſhip; our having the greater part of the component materials within ourſelves; the very large capitals our manufacturers can employ, and above all, that natural bias which Engliſhmen have for Manufactures and Commerce, and the ſpirit which, ariſing from the glorious liberty we enjoy under a king whoſe greateſt glory is his people's happineſs, and a miniſtry whoſe conſtant ſtudy is the national proſperity, and who have ever made *Commerce* their peculiar care; theſe cannot fail to give the balance in favour of Great Britain throughout the globe. The *Factor*, in proof of his aſſertions, tells us, that an account was ſent laſt March to Parliament, from all the "*Grinding Shops*," (meaning the public revenue offices) of the amount of our taxes, divides them among the number of inhabitants of this country, and compares it with an equal diviſion of the French taxes amongſt the inhabitants of that country. He then informs us, that there is a difference in favour of the latter of *three* to *one*; and that the

ſame proportion exiſts in every article of livelihood. The time of the Factor, or Woollen Draper, might as well have been employed in peruſal of his pattern books, as in *Monſ. Neckar's* Treatiſe, from whence he reaps his knowledge; but the authority of this Frenchman is not in this caſe altogether to be depended upon: there are many circumſtances, which are not included in his calculation, that would greatly enhance this ſtatement; and it is a well-known fact, that whilſt the wiſdom of our government has formed a well-founded, ingenious, and unimpeachable ſyſtem for the future diſcharge of our national debt, and of conſequence a pleaſing and certain relief from our preſent weight of taxation; the finances of *France* are in a miſerable ſtate, and will require immenſe burthens of taxation to relieve them; it is, therefore, clear, that if, even in their preſent ſtate, their manufacturers are not capable of coping with ours, yet the balance muſt hereafter be conſiderably more in our favour, from the riſing proſpect of our finances, and the evident depreſſion of theirs.

A Hiſtory of the Woollen Manufactures in France, and an Enumeration of the Towns next takes place; but though he tells us in *Capitals* that the liſt at the end of his letter contains "near FIVE HUNDRED TOWNS IN FRANCE, ALL ENGAGED IN THE WOOLLEN MANUFACTORY; ALL

BLEST WITH LOW TAXES, CHEAP PROVISIONS, AND OF COURSE CHEAP LABOUR;" yet though he could preſent us with a comparative view of the *French and Engliſh taxes*, of the cheapneſs of proviſion, labour, &c. he is perfectly ſilent, nor attempts to make any calculation of the number of places and manufacturers in which, and by whom the *Woollens* are manufactured in England; but concluding, that every reader muſt implicitly believe, what he thinks proper to aſſert, he peremptorily adds, "Now ſuch being the ſtate of "the French woollens, I aſk this: Will any one "wonder that wherever the French have been "able to gain admittances they have cut and out-"rivalled the Engliſh, and actually got into their "own poſſeſſion, *almoſt the whole monopoly of the* "*foreign markets for woollens?*" Alas, poor *Old England!* in what a pitiful plight would this factious *Factor* repreſent it to be? As from the attention he has paid to the manufacturer of a Pamphlet, it is evident he can ſpare time from the books of his compting-houſe, I would adviſe him to caſt his eye upon the cuſtom-houſe books, and he will there find in the export of our *woollens*, the fulleſt refutation of his abſurd aſſertion. It is well that he thinks proper to except *Portugal*, which nation he indeed ſays, ſtands ſingular, and acts in direct oppoſition to what every individual, and every other nation would do;—for, he adds, "let common ſenſe determine whether it is

"poſſible

" poſſible that any buyers will ſhut their eyes to " their own intereſt, in order wilfully to purchaſe " of thoſe that ſell deareſt?—What it would be " idle to expect from individuals in trade, it is " downright nonſenſe to hope from nations in " commerce."—Certainly it would, and ſome reaſon muſt counteract it, and operate to their intereſt, in order to induce them to act otherwiſe. The Portugueſe found in their Treaty with us, that they ſhould by taking our *woollens*, find a vent for their wines; but this was not all, they knew, that though the French might ſell woollens at a leſs price, yet from the ſuperiority in point of manufacture, the Engliſh woollens were in fact the cheapeſt. But notwithſtanding, he avers that this agreement " was wiſe and juſt, " and both parties ſerved each other," by the mutual exchange of commodities; yet the Portugueſe, according to his account, have been ſo abſurd as to admit the French " by degrees to " get in their woollens, in ſpite of the common " intereſt that England and Portugal have to " barter in the way agreed on."—If this were true, the Portugueſe muſt pay for French cloths, in *hard dollars*, as they have no commodities which France ſtands in need of; and the diſadvantage they muſt labour under by having the balance of ſuch a trade ſo much againſt them, renders ſuch a ſuppoſition groundleſs.

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The French Treaty, he next obſerves, is calculated to reward France for having done us this miſchief, " by doing every thing to admit her " wines, and conſequently to make our con- " ſumption of the Portugal wines ſo much leſs " as to take away the great motive for the Por- " gueſe preferring our woollens."—In the firſt place I anſwer, that the ſame reaſons which firſt induced *Portugal* to take Engliſh woollens, ſtill does, and will ever exiſt ; that French wines are by no means calculated to pleaſe the general palate of the Engliſh nation ; and that half of the wine now conſumed in this country, under the name of *port* wine, is equal to the whole produce of the Portugueſe vintage. The real demand for their wines will ſtill be the ſame, and this added to the ſuperior excellence of the Engliſh woollens, will ever preſerve us their market for them. Not the ſmalleſt apprehenſion need therefore be entertained, but that *Portugal* will, for her own ſake, continue to carry on the moſt amicable commercial intercourſe with this kingdom ; convinced, whatever pains the *patriotic tribe* may take to propagate an idea to the contrary in this country, that her intereſts cannot be prejudiced by the Treaty, however our's may be aggrandized. The concluſion of the Treaty now negotiating with *Portugal*, will ſhew the futility and falſity of their arguments. This ſuperior excellence will in all other markets, as *Germany*, *Holland*, *America*, &c. always

always outweigh the pretended inferiority of price of the French woollens, and preſerve us in the preference.

Having endeavoured to inculcate an idea that *France* had contrived to "*cut and out rival*" us in *all* foreign markets, he wiſhes to excite alarms of a much more ſerious nature, that they "muſt "as certainly underſell us in our own *home* mar-"kets if this treaty is allowed to paſs into a law." To effect this, he begins with a quotation of Sir *Theodore Janſen*'s words upon the ſubject, an authority no one will in this inſtance diſpute, and concludes with obſerving, "That the preſerva-"tion of the *home market* to our own manufac-"tures is the great vital principle never to be de-"parted from"—which no one will pretend or wiſh to deny. He next informs us, that "from "the wool grown to the conſumer, a piece of "broad cloth paſſes through *one hundred hands*:" —This may be true; but why he ſhould argue that "the numerous trades employed in the ſe-"veral beneficial commodities ariſing from ſheep, "ſuch as ſkins, tallow, &c." have any thing to do with the woollen manufacture, I cannot conceive. There can be no limitation to the number he would thus lug in by the head and ſhoulders to ſupport his argument; for as well as dealer in *ſkins* and *tallow*, he might bring parchment and brown paper makers, rag mop-makers, &c. &c. &c.

&c. and all the tribe of old cloaths men from the exchange in Rag Fair, who have all infinitely more to do with the *woollen* manufactory than the former. But what is the uſe which the Draper makes of them? Why to ſwell the liſt of perſons employed in manufacturing that harmleſs animal, a *ſheep*; and thereby endeavour to eſtabliſh his opinion, that "THE BRITISH WOOLLEN MANUFACTURERS *are entitled* to the FIRST, and GREATEST CONSIDERATION."—"Yes," exclaims he, "I will ſay, with heart-felt conviction and triumph, *we are the beſt benefactors to our country!*"—That this branch of manufacturers are of great importance to their country, no perſon will pretend to controvert; but that they "are entitled" to have a conſideration of their particular benefit, to an excluſion of that of other branches of manufacture, I abſolutely deny; and ſee no reaſon why they ſhould, at *this day*, demand the "*firſt and greateſt conſideration.*" Many years back, when our other branches of manufacture were in a very trifling ſtate, comparatively with the *woollen*, the latter might indeed claim ſo diſtinguiſhed a preference; but at this time, when there are many other branches of ſimilar extent and importance, particularly the *cotton* and *hardware*, no good reaſon can be advanced why they ſhould not be upon an equality, as they may ſurely boaſt, they are equally "*benefactors to our country.*"

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This writer is well aware of the weakneſs of mankind in general, and of their natural tendency to their own peculiar intereſts, eſpecially men whoſe ideas are contracted by trade; who have no views beyond their own exiſtence, and what immediately points to their particular profit. He therefore addreſſes himſelf to their paſſions, urges the bad effects the treaty muſt have againſt their preſent intereſts, without once hinting at the neceſſity of *individual advantage*, at peculiar times, giving way to the *general good*. This, however, is the buſineſs of a wiſe miniſtry; and has been purſued by the preſent politic, upright, and patriotic adminiſtration. This was evidenced in their firm and unwearied perſeverance through that prudent and wiſe meaſure, the *Iriſh Propoſitions*, againſt the powerful oppoſition of intereſted individuals, and the noiſy uproar of factious partizans. Like judicious parents, they ſhew no partiality to any one of their family; but act in a manner which moſt tends to the good of the whole. To prove what I have ſaid of the partiality of individuals, need I give a more ſtriking example, than the conduct of Mr. *Wedgwood*, who was ſo exceedingly active during the diſcuſſion of the *Iriſh Propoſitions?* Who was more inimical to the miniſter, or who took more pains to excite the public diſapprobation of the meaſure? We have been repeatedly told, that the ſame objections in a great meaſure exiſt againſt the *Treaty*,

as againſt the *Propoſitions*; but that gentleman has now an eye to the *Pottery*, and Faction have no longer got his aſſiſtance;—as long as the French are likely to make his LOAM ſtir, the devil may take the LOOM. This evidently ſhews, that in forming a general commercial arrangement with a foreign power, a miniſter ought to pay no regard to the repreſentations of any particular claſs of people.

The *Draper*, in order to put a *good gloſs* upon his work, tells us of the ſuperior advantages the French have in their *ſcarlet* and *black* cloths. "In both of theſe," ſays he, "the French have "the art of working one up *with ſuch a gloſs*, "and the other to ſo *bright a colour*, as I am ſor- "ry to ſay we cannot come up to, and yet they "can ſell them cheaper." He then tells us a long tale of the *Clergy*, the *Law*, and the *Army*, in which he affects to be "*jocular*," as he terms it; but however the *woollen-drapers* may "fleece" the "*black gentry*," as he terms them, this *Factor* muſt not think he can "*fleece*" the public of their underſtanding. One part of this narration, however, reflects no credit upon his ſuppoſed profeſſion as a *Draper*; where, in mentioning the deceaſe of great perſonages, he ſays—"Yet they "ſerved us at laſt, by giving a ſpirit to the "woollens, and getting off many thouſands of our "*worſt* and *moſt damaged blacks*." Men who can take

take ſuch *unfair* advantages of the public, have no right to grumble if the miniſter ſhould find it neceſſary to take a *fair* advantage for the good of that public; and if ſuch advantages are openly avowed, it is probable many greater ones are concealed—all which will juſtify the miniſter in promoting the general manufactures of the kingdom, even with ſome diſadvantageous circumſtances, apparently againſt the woollens. The *Draper*'s arguments in favour of French *blacks* and *ſcarlets*, are however as futile as thoſe he has advanced in other parts of his letter againſt the Treaty. The French blacks have indeed, in general, a greater gloſs than the Engliſh; but this, if the Engliſh nation preferred the gloſs, as it is obtained by preſſing, might be as well accompliſhed by the Engliſh manufacturer.—Thoſe "*pinching agents*" and "*trading colonels*" whom the Factor tells would deal in *French ſcarlets*, might perhaps not get much credit by their *œconomy*; they would indeed preſent to the nation what he ſays would be "*a fine ſight to ſee*"—that of "*a Britiſh army in French regimentals*;" for, in a ſhort time, thoſe *ſcarlets* which are ſaid to be of ſo "*bright a colour*," would become *white*. This is no news to any taylor who cuts *French ſcarlets*

Returning to the ſame language with which he ſet out, he changes his ſtile of jocularity, and

begins a tale of woe, ſo affecting indeed, that I cannot help quoting it. "After ſeven years ap-"prenticeſhip," exclaims he, "and being in the "practical line of it for twenty or thirty years "afterwards, is it fair that you ſhould be turned "out in bodies friendleſs, and ſent a-drift to "learn a new trade? Is it juſt to drive you from "your ſettlements,—your homes,—your neigh-"bours, and your relations in various parts of "the Kingdom, in queſt of bread to *Mancheſter?*" Alas, poor weavers!—But the Draper has at any rate choſen good quarters for them, and no doubt for two very forcible and charitable reaſons: The firſt is,—he knew, that a weaver in one branch, could not be long learning to weave in another; and that carding, ſpinning, and paſſing *cotton* through the loom, could not differ very widely from a ſimilar proceſs in *wool*;—and the other, that, from the infinite increaſe of the Trade of *Mancheſter* which muſt naturally enſue, in conſequence of the *Commercial Treaty*, the *manufacture* there would require an amazing number of additional hands. I commend the Draper's humanity, that amidſt all the diſtreſſes he had heaped upon the heads of the poor *woollen-manufacturers*, he has adminiſtered ſome conſolation, and fixed upon a very proper aſylum for them. Even for their *looms* he has provided a ſale, that they may be as little loſers as poſſible by the Treaty, and tells them,

them, " the French will take them off their hands, " *to carry on their encreaſed trade.*"

I will venture to aſſert, that had the Draper ſtuck to his firſt charitable deſign, and left his forlorn weavers in *Mancheſter*, he would there have found a ſufficient employment for all that were diſcarded ; and I can only attribute it to a ſudden paroxyſm of *patriotic ſpleen*, that he ſhould ſo ſoon hurry them away to *Sheffield*, where I confeſs, (as he ſays) " *the handieſt weaver may cut* " *but a poor figure at the anvil.*" This, he however ſeems ſenſible of, when he aſks the queſtion, " How will an old man like to be a young " learner ?—If he reflects upon his *new trade* of an Author, he perhaps can anſwer this queſtion himſelf. How will any maſter-tradeſman bear to ſhift into an apprentice ? Not at all, I anſwer, unleſs they could handle *their* tools better than he does *his*, in this *new* occupation. " And yet, " adds he, I have read a copy of a letter from one " of our great ſenators, which ſays, *the demand* " *for labour will be the ſame, though it may be in* " *different places, and for different occupations, and* " *what is the diſbanding ſome particular claſſes of* " *manufacturers, more than that of ſo many ſoldiers?*" Here the draper has *exceeded his meaſure* ; I think he ſhould have informed us, who this ſenator was ;—though his opinion is by no means to be combated : It is the ſame to the nation, whether

the

the labour is in one branch of trade or another, ſo long as the ſame proportion exiſts. *Manufacturers* and *ſoldiers* are both uſeful to the ſtate, in their different capacities. When the latter has finiſhed the duty of his military calling, he becomes uſeful in another way; and ſo it may be with the manufacturers of any one particular claſs, when the commercial calls of their country requires an encreaſe of hands in one branch, from a diminution in another. The Draper, however, does not chuſe to ſhew the matter in this obvious point of view, but in the true ſpirit of party rant exclaims, "is it poſſible that the cleverest work-"men in our manufactures could turn all at once "to be ſkilful and expert in another, juſt as one "of our mercenary red-coats turns to a labourer "in rags, and lays down his muſquet and his bay-"onet in exchange for a ſpade and a pick-axe?" Well ſaid, Draper. This is a flouriſh of the pen, worthy of your great *prototype*. Never loſing ſight of the main object, that of endeavouring to promote a jealouſy amongſt the woollen trade of the rival manufactories, with all the fore knowledge of a *ſecond ſon of a ſecond ſon*, he proceeds;—"but "why, in God's name! if the French muſt have "leave all at once to pour in their cheap wool-"lens in return for their giving a lift for a time "to the COTTON, the IRON, and the POTTE-"RIES, (I ſay, for a time; for in a few years, "by the artful tricks of the French, even thoſe

"branches

" branches cannot fail to be as great ſufferers as " we ſhall now.) Why may'nt our manufactu- " rers have the heavy differences that we pay in " exciſes *countervailed*, as they call it, &c.— " This is to be done for the *cotton*, the *iron*, and " the *potteries*, in one way; why not for the " woollens in another?" To this I reply, becauſe it is unneceſſary; the excellence of our *wollens* will render the meaſure needleſs; their quality will ever ſecure them the preference; the woollen is an old and well eſtabliſhed branch, that mocks all competition, and which we can never loſe; the others are not arrived at a ſufficient maturity, and therefore require a more partial, foſtering, and attentive care. Again, telling us of the exciſes rendering every article dear, and repeating his queſtion, " If our woollens " (as it is known to be the caſe) are all to nothing " *dearer* than the French, by this very reaſon of " being high taxed and exciſed, Why ſhould " not we too demand a *countervailing* duty."—I have in part anſwered this already, and need only add, that the ſhipping and unſhipping, freightage, and other charges operate to a ſimilar effect, and countervail all the advantages the Draper has given to the French manufacturer.

The *Draper* next acquaints them with a circumſtance, which he ſays " *they all know*" that a " certain quantity of *Spaniſh* wool is abſolutely

" neceſſary to working up the *Engliſh* wool for finer " cloths;" and then enveighs againſt the treaty for bringing in *French woollens*, before we have any treaty with *Spain* for her wool, though the French are entitled by treaty to the admiſſion of it " *free of all duty for ever.*" But let me tell the Draper, that *Engliſh* wool is as neceſſary to *France*, as *Spaniſh* wool is to *England*; and our miniſters are too wiſe, and too vigilant, not to take care, that if there is any impediment to prevent our procuring the *wool* of *Spain*, the French ſhould find it as difficult to procure the *Engliſh wool.*

Leaſt his arguments ſhould not have their deſired weight, and wiſely judging, that example is of more force than precept, he recites the contents of ſeveral petitions preſented to Parliament in the reign of *Queen Anne*, a period when the ſtate, and ſituation of our *Woollen Manufactures* were as different as poſſible from what they are at this time; and when indeed there exiſted ſome ſmall grounds for apprehenſion, which do not at this time appear. Nothing can be a ſtronger proof of this, than that our manufacturers, from the very increaſed demand which has been gradually riſing for a long time paſt, have thought it compatible with their intereſt to raiſe the price of their cloths conſiderably.

Some art is diſcovered in the Draper's drawing to a concluſion, whilſt the effect, which he hoped

hoped the recital of theſe petitions would produce, ſtill operated, and which he imagined he might probably deſtroy, by attempting any further arguments upon the ſubject, ſenſible of the futility of thoſe he had already advanced. Another ſpur was, however, thought neceſſary, and in the true orthodox ſtile of modern patriotiſm, he finiſhes with an exclamation, "*But, for God's ſake, in following the ſteps of your forefathers, try to imitate alſo their temper, and good order. You are not likely to be leſs ſufferers, and you'll ſcarcely find yourſelves more wiſe!*"

Obſerve the cant which follows: "*With a "moderate, but a firm ſpirit; with decent, but "manly boldneſs, you ſtill may triumph over all your "enemies!*"

Having, in purſuance of my intention, gone through the drudgery of examining minutely all the fallacious and deceitful arguments of this *fiend* of *faction*, and remarked upon each, I truſt, in ſuch a manner, as muſt eradicate every ill impreſſion, every idle apprehenſion that might ariſe in the minds of the *woollen manufacturers*, from a haſty and ſuperficial review of them, I ſhall make a few general obſervations upon the Draper's Letter, and the treaty which is the ſubject of it. With reſpect to the former, it is very evidently the production of one of thoſe *wights* of *oppoſi-*

 ſition,

tion, who, under the maſk of a patriotic regard for his country, and a particular attention to a branch of manufacture, he thinks moſt likely to anſwer his purpoſe, flatters himſelf, the flimſy diſguiſe he has put on cannot be ſeen through, and that the greateſt fallacies and abſurd miſrepreſentations of one of the beſt, moſt rational, moſt prudent, and wiſeſt meaſures that was ever conceived by a politic and philanthropic ſtateſman, he ſhall aſſiſt in reſtoring his friends to thoſe ſituations which, thank Heaven, they but for a ſhort time diſgraced.—With reſpect to the treaty, I will, without heſitation, aſſert, that taken in the aggregate, it can by no means injure, but muſt, in all probability, promote and encourage an extenſion of our trade and commerce. If it excites an emulation between the two nations, it muſt have a good effect on our manufacturers; it will be a ſpur to their induſtry, and cauſe them ſtill to improve what at this day ſtands perfectly unrivalled in all other kingdoms, the *woollen manufactures* of this nation. As a meaſure of enlarged policy, it does the higheſt credit to the wiſdom and philanthropy of the preſent adminiſtration, who have not viewed the matter through the medium of partial prejudice, but with a benevolent eye to the general good and intereſt of both nations. In this generous, enlarged, and profitable view have they conceived it, and ſo apparent is it to all *impartial* obſervers,

that I have no doubt it will meet with the full approbation of Parliament, excepting thoſe inſignificant and minute circumſtances, which in a buſineſs of ſo complicated a nature, muſt evidently occur in its formation. The puny effects of ſuch a partizan as the WOOLLEN DRAPER can do no credit to his employers. For to conclude in his own words, reſpecting the treaty, it is as "poor and ordinary a piece of ſtuff as ever came "from a workman's hand, badly worked, all "over faulty, and of no conſiſtence."

BRITISH 25 SE 86 MUSEUM

I am, &c.

G. P. *A Friend to the Treaty.*

FINIS.